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Amherst's Recreation Current Conditions

Recreation Resources

Passive Recreation Opportunities

- More than 2,400 acres of conservation land
- 24.5 miles of existing trails

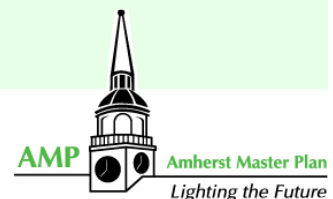
Active Recreation Opportunities

- Recreation Department with active program, especially for youth athletics
- Very few playground/neighborhood facilities
- More than 34 playfields
- No community park (minimum size of 40 acres)
- No picnic areas
- 9 baseball/softball fields
- 1 exercise course
- Only 5 public tennis courts
- Baboosic Lake town beach
- 2 canoe launches on Souhegan River
- 3 golf courses
- Facilities concentrated around schools
- Some private facilities (tennis, swimming, summer camp)

What Does It Mean?

- Amherst has an active recreation program.
- Lacks neighborhood playgrounds.
- While number of soccer, football and other sports fields meet national standards they don't meet local needs..
- Seems to be limited active recreational opportunities for seniors, adults, and teens.
- Lack of community park with picnic and other facilities for families may not support desire for community events and activities.
- Future use of Cemetery Fields may be an issue for the future
- Needs for additional funding for maintaining existing facilities.
- Access to a diversity of recreation facilities for all residents?
- Future of private golf courses?
- Apparent demand for town-wide trail system (see discussion in Circulation and Conservation.
- Some tax-deeded property may serve neighborhood recreation needs.
- May be opportunities to expand use of some existing facilities.

See draft section of Amherst's 2008 Master Plan Phase 1 report for additional details and sources.



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Amherst's Recreation What We Want

Voice of Amherst¹

"The Town Green and other parks help define the town's character."

Athletics and recreation contribute to the spirit of the community."

"We need a multi-purpose recreation center."

"We need more opportunities for recreation for all ages."

"We need to maintain and improve our existing recreation facilities."



Goals to Light the Future²

- **Continue to provide a wide variety of passive and active recreation opportunities** for adults, youth, teens, and seniors.
- **Continue to develop a diversity of formal recreation facilities**—fields, courts, playgrounds, etc.—and programs for the health and benefit of all residents.
- **Continue to develop a diversity of informal recreation facilities and programs** for the health and benefit of all residents.
- **Continue to develop recreational trails in order to provide a town-wide and inter-town system.**
- **Assure equitable access to recreational facilities.**



¹ Resident input, based on various visioning exercises.

² Developed based on Steering Committee and resident input..

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Amherst's Recreation What We Can Do ¹

To Develop a Diversity of Formal Recreation Facilities

1. Develop a comprehensive inventory of existing recreation facilities and programs and analyze their adequacy for current and future generations of Amherst residents.
2. Explore providing more fields for soccer, lacrosse etc. to meet local demands.
3. Develop a plan to replace the Cemetery Fields when/if the land is needed by the Cemetery Commission.
4. Analyze existing tax-title land in terms of its suitability to meet formal recreation needs.
5. Explore developing new facilities and programs to meet the needs of teens.
6. Explore supporting the development of a skating/hockey facility.
7. Explore encouraging private recreation facilities that complement Amherst's rural, agricultural heritage.
8. Explore requiring the inclusion of recreation facilities in new developments.
9. Work with private providers of recreation opportunities. There may be additional opportunities to use some of their facilities.

To Develop a Diversity of Informal Recreation Facilities and Programs

1. Explore the development of neighborhood parks and a community park with informal recreation facilities like picnic areas, and playground equipment.
2. Provide additional and improved access to the river and major ponds and lakes.

¹ Potential objectives and strategies for discussion.

To Develop Recreational Trails in Order to Develop a Town-wide and Inter-town Trail System

1. Develop a town-wide greenway plan that connects open spaces with recreation areas and residential areas with a network bicycle and pedestrian paths.

To Assure Equitable Access to Recreation Facilities

1. Locate facilities so they are accessible to all.

